(c) whether Government propose to stop summer and winter vacations for Judges; and

(d) if not, the logic behind continuing these vacations when arrears of cases have been mounting year by year?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI ARUN JAITELY) : (a) As on April 16, 2003, there were two vacancies in the Supreme Court and 136 in the High Courts. In the Supreme Court, the vacancies arose on 19-12-2002 and 5-4-2003 respectively. The information regarding the age of vacancies in the High Courts is being collected and shall be laid on the Table of the House. However, vacancies keep arising on account of retirements, resignation or elevation of Judges.

(b) Pursuant to the Supreme Court Judgment of October 6, 1993 read with the Advisory Opinion of October 28, 1998, the process of initiation of proposals for appointment of Judges of a High Court lies with the Chief Justice of that High Court. The Government has, however, been requesting the Chief Justices of the High Courts, Chief Ministers and the Governors of the States, from time to time, to initiate proposals for filling up of the present and the vacancies anticipated during the next six months. They were last reminded on April 3, 2003.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, in order to reduce huge pendencies in the High Courts, the Government has requested the High Courts to consider that the vacation/holidays of the High Courts be fixed in such a manner that the number of working days (Bench sittings) of High Courts may not be less than at least 222 days in a year.

Lok Adalat in Jharkhand and Bihar

†3211. SHRI ABHAY KANT PRASAD : The Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Lok Adalats held in Jharkhand and Bihar during the last three years;

(b) to what extent people have been benefited by these Lok Adalats;

(c) the number of cases/disputes disposed of by the Lok Adalats during the above said period;

(d) whether Government propose to arrange more such Adalats and also at new places, and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) ɔ (c) As per information provided by National Legal Services Authority, the umber of Lok Adalats organised in Bihar by the Bihar State Legal Services \uthority and the number of cases disposed of therein during the last three inancial years is as follows :—

Period	No. of Lok Adalats held	No. of Cases disposed
1999-2000	184	36,190
2000-2001	1351	11,256
2001-2002	1608	15,714

The State Legal Services Authority in Jharkhand was established only in Aarch 2002. The information in respect of Bihar also includes the information ı respect of areas, which are now part of Jharkhand. Therefore, no separate .atistical data for the above period, in respect of Jharkhand, is available.

(d) and (e) Organising Lok Adalats is a continuous process. By its very ature, the purposes of holding Lok Adalats are need based. As such, no specific ıformation as to the number and places of Lok Adalats to be organized can be ıdicated.

Consensus on Women's Reservation Bill

3212. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are set to go ahead with the Women's Reservation Bill, despite having failed to secure a consensus during an all-party meet;

(b) whether Government are considering to incorporate the Election Commission's suggestions to leave the issue of providing 33 per cent reservation to women, to political parties while finalising their candidates for both Parliamentary and Assembly elections; and

(c) whether Government propose to dilute the provisions of the Bill and if so, to what extent?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) In all-party meeting held on 7-3-2003 under the Chairmanship of the Hon'ble Prime Minister again an effort was made by the Government to evolve consensus on the provisions of the Constitution (Eighty-fifth Amendment) Bill, 1999 which provide that as nearly as one-third of the seats shall be reserved for women in the House of the People and Legislative Assemblies of States.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.